

"THE SUN" SEEKS TO SOLVE PROBLEM OF POPULAR PRICED COUNTRY HOMES

To Hold Competition for Draughtsmen in Hope of Developing Better Types of Dwellings for Communities Near New York

In announcing to-day the programme of its second Country Home Competition THE SUN extends to all architectural draughtsmen and to students of schools of architecture in this part of the country an invitation to help toward the betterment of home communities in the suburbs of New York. The programme calls for designs and floor plans for a dwelling that can be erected for a sum not to exceed \$4,500, and for the four best solutions of the problem as decided by a competent jury of practising architects THE SUN will award prizes totalling \$500.

A dwelling of comparatively low cost has been selected for the purposes of this competition because it represents a building of most popular cost and a type to which practically no attention has been paid by those upon whom the duty rests of developing the suburbs of New York. Architects, developers and builders have worked out most attractive types of homes for those who can afford luxurious places, but they have had little time to devote to the needs of the ordinary mortal who when he has spent, say, \$6,000 on his completed residence has done about all he can afford to do.

Solution of the home problem of the multitudes is one of the tasks that confront the coming generation of architects. On them devolves the responsibility for the proper arrangement and design of the thousands of homes that will be erected during the next twenty years in the great sections that have been opened recently to settlement. Just as architects of the present day have given character and attractiveness to the more expensive districts, so the younger generation will be called upon to place communities where people of moderate means will live on a basis with similar sections in other cities.

To provide homes that are at once attractive, well built and low priced is the greatest problem that developers have on their hands to-day. Even the man who can spend but little on his home construction has ideas of comfort and convenience coupled with architectural necessities which make it impossible for him to go to the old time country builder for his home. That worthy, the "architect and builder" no longer finds it possible to create a community of homes from a single stock plan, giving variety to his settlement merely by painting one house gray, another white and another yellow. To-day buyers of homes already built take no interest in a community unless it possesses architectural attractiveness and well arranged houses, and when it comes to putting up his own home the average low priced house builder demands just as good arrangement and architectural lines as the man who might spend ten times as much.

Most men who build houses that cost \$4,500 to erect cannot afford, of course, to pay such architectural fees as would be charged on an operation of that sort. Such a man will buy all the periodicals that tell of house building, from which he will take a mass of suggestions to which he will couple his own desires. All these ideas and suggestions he will carry to an architect, to whom he will say that he wants them all in a dwelling to cost not more than \$4,500.

The result in every case is one of three things. The architect at once blasts the prospective builder's hopes and sends him away dissatisfied, in which case the builder will go to some less reputable designer, who will promise him everything he wants at the stated price and then will load him down with extra charges. The third result may be that the dwelling is finally built, shorn of most of its attractive features, a dissatisfaction to the owner for all time.

Even in the best communities of moderate priced homes where considerable money is spent every year to attract people from the cities no appreciable step has been made in the betterment of architectural designs. In some few sections attractive plans and exteriors have been adapted to cheaper construction, but the attempt to build a house planned to cost \$15,000 for \$5,000 has usually resulted in skimping here and there to the extent that the house lacked all the charm and individuality that the original designer intended it to have.

This inability to obtain proper homes at reasonable prices has been the means of keeping thousands of families from becoming suburban residents. To-day many people find it necessary either to spend upward of \$10,000 or to have to take a dwelling poorly designed, badly arranged and badly built. That there is a decidedly good demand for homes in the suburbs that combine good architecture and substantial

construction within a price of \$4,500 is the assertion of every real estate developer, but the great difficulty in supplying this demand comes from the inability of builders to get designs and plans for houses that will meet present day requirements that can be put up at reasonable cost.

It is for this reason that THE SUN has selected for this competition a dwelling that can be erected at a cost not to exceed \$4,500. This figure does not include the cost of lighting fixtures nor decorations. It does, however, include the cost of plumbing fixtures, heating plant and wiring for lighting. Figured on the average cost of land in the suburbs such a house should be possible of production for a total amount not in excess of \$4,500.

In its first Country Home Competition THE SUN called for designs for a building that could be produced for not more than \$7,500. That the competition was a decided success may be judged from the fact that 142 designs were submitted, from which the judges selected that by Alfred Cookman Cass as most worthy of the capital prize of

\$250. Since that competition THE SUN has received more than 3,000 inquiries for copies of the designs submitted, the requests coming from every part of the country. Though the competition was held two years ago practically every day brings requests for details of the results.

Many of these inquiries are, however, for designs for houses of lower cost. Many writers declare that they have sought far and wide for attractive designs in low priced houses, but have been unable to find anything that couples modern ideas of arrangement and design with moderate cost.

Architects throughout the city have endorsed THE SUN's Country Home Competition and have expressed a desire to help make it a success. They say that to win such a competition would be glory enough for any man, and many have said that they would be decidedly proud to have one of their office employees entered as the winner. It is part of the plan of the competition to devote considerable space in THE SUN to the publication of the designs submitted. Beginning

on the first Sunday in April and continuing for nine successive Sundays designs will be printed in groups, with sufficient space allowed to each plan and perspective to give it proper showing. Awards will be made, however, from original drawings. Judges of the competition will make their selections as soon as convenient to them after the designs submitted are assembled, and the awards will be made as soon as the judges announce their selections. The prize winners will be announced on the first Sunday in April and their designs will be printed as soon after that as practicable.

There is no doubt of the interest the designs submitted will arouse among builders, developers and individuals who contemplate home building. It has been the experience of THE SUN to receive numerous inquiries concerning attractive designs submitted in its first competition and concerning the designers. Such inquiries were turned over to the designer mentioned, and as a result a number of commissions to prepare plans were obtained

for those young men. The same practice will be followed in the present competition.

THE SUN has attempted to make the terms of the competition as clear as possible in the programme printed on this page. Experience indicates that many competitors will want to know a good many details more than are published. All inquiries addressed to THE SUN will be answered fully and promptly.

Three of City's Leading Architects To Judge Country Home Competition

BURT L. FENNER of McKim, Mead & White, John Russell Pope and Samuel Breck Parkman Trowbridge of Trowbridge & Livingston have kindly consented to act as a jury to pass on the merits of the drawings that will be submitted in THE SUN's country home competition. THE SUN believes that in these men it has secured the services of three of the ablest architects the country affords. Each judge is a man of wide experience and is known in every corner of the world where fine art and masterful designing are known. Each man has given this city and other cities monuments of which Americans are proud; structures which have brought great credit to American architects.

Designers of the highest order, masters of detail, with years of experience, this jury assures competitors in the country home competition that merit and merit only will influence the judgment. Not since THE SUN's competition of two years ago have young men and women designers been given such an opportunity of having their work appraised by past masters in the designing profession. The young man or woman who receives a mark of merit from Messrs. Fenner, Pope and Trowbridge will win recognition of the highest order.

Mr. Fenner is a Rochester man and a graduate of the University of Rochester. Finishing his studies there in 1889, he entered the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1890. He returned to Rochester to practice his profession. Though a young man fresh from college, his work in Rochester apparently attracted the attention of the veteran and universally known designers, McKim, Mead & White, and in 1891 he came to New York to join their staff.

From the start he showed considerable ability, so much so that within fourteen years of his joining the McKim, Mead & White staff he was made a member of the firm. Mr. Fenner's work has been cloaked behind the name of the firm. To the outside world he is not known, but architects know him and his work and his ability as a designer. Since he came to the McKim, Mead & White office twenty-five years ago he has had a hand in every structure the firm has designed. More recently Mr. Fenner's hand is even more clearly seen in the monumental work the firm has done.

Many of the structures designed by McKim, Mead & White in the last decade are considered among the finest examples of modern architecture. They include the \$12,000,000 Municipal Building erected near the Brooklyn Bridge, a structure of towering height, the tallest and finest community building to be found anywhere. The new post office, on Eighth avenue, from Thirty-first to Thirty-third street, the headquarters of the postal service in this city, is another of their works. It is in the rear of the big Pennsylvania Station, also a McKim, Mead & White monument, which covers the two blocks between Seventh and Eighth avenues.

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The new Bellevue Hospital group is a work of Mr. Fenner's firm, so are many of the Columbia University buildings, Metropolitan Museum of Art and the library of J. P. Morgan.

Though the public gives credit to the McKim, Mead & White firm for these monumental structures and others in various sections of the country, the architect and building world, and a good proportion of it to Mr. Fenner. This is evident by the honors which have come to him in the last five years from institutions of learning and architecture.

In 1911 he was made an honorary master of arts by his alma mater, the University of Rochester. In the same year he was elected a fellow of the Brooklyn Institute of Art and Sciences. He is a director of the American Institute of Architects, a member of the American Federation of Arts.



BURT L. FENNER. Besides the new temple his monumental work, such as the Lincoln Memorial at Hodgenville, Ky.; the Leola Mausoleum and the Stewart Tomb at Woodlawn, is true to the best Greek ideals. On account of the helpful attitude which Mr. Pope has always maintained President Taft commissioned him in 1911 to study the possibilities of various sites in Washington for the new Lincoln Memorial in the capital.

Of his domestic work the residences of John R. McLean, Mrs. S. R. Hitt, former Governor Levi P. Morton, Henry White, George Hewitt Myers and Mrs. R. S. McCormick in Washington are strongly reminiscent of Italian palace architecture, while his work in the Long Island colony has been appropriately inspired by the old French chateau boxes and chateaux and by the pleasantly intimate but stately country seats of England. On Long Island his clientele has included Middleton S. Burrill, W. K. Vanderbilt, Jr., Mrs. Arthur Scott Burden at Jericho, Ogden L. Mills at Woodbury, Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont at Hempstead, W. L. Stowe at Roslyn and Charles M. Gould at Greenlawn.

The villa of Dr. Henry Barton Jacobs at Newport, the Tudor House at the Newport home of Stuart Duncan, and the Colonial country seat of Robert Collier at Wickham, N. J., are monuments to Mr. Pope's ingenious adaptability of style in the solution of the intricate problems and requirements of large residence design.

Mr. Pope has been a fellow in the American Institute of Architects since 1907.

Mr. Trowbridge is one of the best known architects in America. His range and experience are most extensive. Finishing his studies here, he went abroad to complete his course. His profession has taken him into many fields. Mr. Trowbridge is a New Yorker. In 1883 he received his bachelor of arts from Trinity and nine years later was made a master of arts. After finishing at Trinity he entered Columbia University's school of architecture.

Graduated from Columbia he was sent by the Archaeological Institute to superintend the erection of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Greece. From Athens Mr. Trowbridge went to Paris to study at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. He is a doctor of science, fellow of the American Institute of Architects, incor-

porator of the American Academy in Rome, former president of the Society of American Philhellenes, vice-president of the Alliance Francaise Comité de New York and a Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur.

Soon after finishing his studies in Paris Mr. Trowbridge came back to New York and entered the office of George B. Post. Four years later he and Goodhue and Livingston formed a partnership. The firm has planned many fine dwellings, business structures and public buildings. The Bankers Trust Building at the corner of Wall and Nassau streets and the J. P. Morgan offices diagonally opposite, two of the noblest buildings of New York's financial district, are the work of Mr. Trowbridge and his partner. The Bimac Hotel at the corner of Park and Lexington streets is one of the recent dwellings designed by Mr. Trowbridge's firm.

All streets west of Third avenue not indicated as residential streets have been indicated as business streets. Madison avenue has been reserved for a business street throughout this district.

East of Third avenue it has been found inexpedient to restrict any considerable area exclusively to residential use. Business has as a rule made such deep inroads on the side streets as to make it impossible to restrict them except against factories and nuisances. The only areas reserved for strictly residential use east of Third avenue are the side streets from Sixty-eighth to Seventy-second street between Second and Third avenues, Seventy-seventh and Seventy-eighth streets east of Avenue A and from Eighty-third to Eighty-ninth street between Marginal street and Avenue A.

The unrestricted area embraces everything east of Second avenue as far north as Sixty-fourth street. At that point it falls back to First avenue. It then runs along First avenue as far north as Seventy-sixth street, where it comes to an abrupt stop on account of John Jay and Carl Schurz parks.

Real Estate Sales and Leases Will Be Found in the Main Section.

THE SUN'S COUNTRY HOME COMPETITION

\$500 in Four Prizes Offered to Draughtsmen for Plans of House to Cost Not More Than \$4,500

DRAUGHTSMEN:

THE SUN invites you to take part in a competition for floor plans and perspective for a country house which can be built at a cost of not more than \$4,500. All designs submitted will be judged by a competent jury of professional men, and for the four designs selected by them as having the best qualities, judged from the terms of the competition, THE SUN will award prizes as follows:

First Prize - \$250 Second Prize - \$150
Third " - 50 Fourth " - 50

This competition is intended to provide a means for young draughtsmen to express their ideas regarding modern country home planning. It is the hope of THE SUN that through the expression of such ideas, gained from a study of present day requirements, a type of modern country home may be evolved which will answer the demand for a combination of attractiveness, comfort, stability and efficiency, all at reasonable cost.

No designs will be accepted from practising architects. In other words, this competition is limited to men and women employed as draughtsmen and draughtswomen in architects' offices. It is further limited to employees of firms whose offices are within the boundaries of Greater New York, Long Island, Westchester county, N. Y.; Hudson, Bergen, Morris, Essex, Passaic, Union, Middlesex and Monmouth counties, N. J., and Fairfield county, Conn., and the students of all architectural schools within these boundaries; students of the Society of Beaux Arts, New York city, and of the architectural schools of Columbia College, University of Pennsylvania, Harvard and Cornell universities and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Terms of the competition are:

FIRST—The design must be for a two story and cellar all the year house. An attic may be included if desired. The building must be one that can be erected, exclusive of cost of land, in the suburban district of New York, for a cost not to exceed \$4,500. It is assumed to have not more than 28,000 cubic feet of contents from the cellar floor. Included in the cost must be all charges for a complete building except for lighting fixtures and decorations. Plumbing fixtures, heating plant and wiring for lighting must be included.

SECOND—For the purposes of this competition the plot on which this house is to be erected is assumed to be level and of an area 100x100 feet. It is assumed that the ground is free of rock and can be excavated at the usual cost for such work.

THIRD—No limit is placed on the area of the structure and the materials to be used in construction except those of cost and size of plot.

FOURTH—It is assumed that the house designed will be for the use of three adults, two children and one servant.

FIFTH—All drawings shall be rendered in pen and ink and shall consist of a plot plan drawn to a scale 1-16 of an inch to a foot; a perspective of the front of the house drawn to a scale 1-4 of an inch to a foot on the nearest corner and plans of both floors drawn to a scale 1-8 of an inch to a foot. All drawings must be mounted on cardboard.

SIXTH—The plot plan must indicate the position of the house on the plot. For this purpose it is assumed that there are three adjoining plots each 100x100 in size, any two of which are assumed to be built on already. The competitive plan must show the proposed improvement of the third plot and its relation to the other two. This block plan must show approaches, paths, garage and garden details of one of them. Floor plans and perspective are to be of sufficient detail that finished plans can be made from them.

SEVENTH—All plans are to remain the property of the various contestants, but THE SUN reserves the right to publish any or all of them without further compensation than has been stated above. Plans are to be returned to competitors as soon after the close of the competition as practicable. The Sun will take reasonable care of all drawings, but will not be responsible for any drawings lost or damaged.

EIGHTH—This competition is to be closed at midnight, March 26. All competitive drawings must by that time be received at the office of THE SUN, 150 Nassau street, New York city.

NINTH—All designs are to be signed by a character selected by each competitor. Accompanying all drawings must be sealed envelopes containing full name and character mark of each competitor; name and address of office in which he or she is employed or the school at which the competitor is studying, and the following form signed by the full name of the competitor:

I (we) affirm that the design and plan submitted by me (us) in this, The Sun's Country Home Competition, are of my (our) own original conception, and have not been adapted or copied from any other design or plan.

Signature.....

TENTH—Each competitor must submit with his drawings a description of his building, materials, &c., the description to be limited to not more than 500 words.

Judges of this competition will be asked to base their awards on the fitness of the design to the material employed, the adaptability of the design, the excellence of the plan and the possibility of production within the allowed amount.